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STATE FOR ECA AND EAP/CM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KPAO PREL OVIP CH

SUBJECT: U/S Hughes and PD Envoy Kwan Engage Guangzhou
Audiences in Public Diplomacy Visit

¶11. SUMMARY: The January 21-23 visit to Guangzhou of Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes, American Public Diplomacy Envoy Michelle Kwan, and Ambassador Clark T. Randt, Jr. was an unprecedented opportunity to showcase American public diplomacy programs reaching out to previously untapped audiences (including elementary students and broadcast journalists) and listened to Chinese views about ways to move the Sino-U.S. relationship forward. U/S Hughes numerous times pointed out that the selection of Michelle Kwan as America's very first Public Diplomacy Envoy was a sign of the great importance the USG places on Sino-U.S. relations. In interviews with two major Guangdong TV stations and in her remarks at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, U/S Hughes emphasized that the United States seeks a deeper, broader, more mature relationship with China, one that encourages the two countries to work together more effectively to solve problems and to bring a greater hope of peace and security to the world. She encouraged increased cultural and student exchanges, adding that there was more that united us than divided us. Ms. Kwan attracted positive and favorable attention, particularly since her father was born in nearby Zhongshan and her mother in Hong Kong. END SUMMARY.

Guangzhou English Training Center for the Handicapped

¶12. The first event of January 22 - a visit to the Guangzhou English Training Center for the Handicapped - was in many ways a template for the remainder of the schedule, a demonstration how America can support preexisting institutions that are working creatively to assist those who are in need and already helping themselves. The first voluntary, non-profit college in China for the physically challenged that specializes in English language study and computer applications, the Center is committed to fostering an environment as expressed by its motto of "dedicated love and disciplined learning." The Center, which has partnered with Zhongshan University and Haizhu Labor Union, has approximately 60 students, all of whom are competitively selected. School officials told the delegation that 96% of the school's graduates generally find jobs as interpreters, office clerks, secretarial staff, or in joint venture enterprises due to their English language and computer skills. U/S Hughes and Ms. Kwan spoke with the students about the importance of hard work and pursuing one's dreams, and heard first-hand what the Center has meant to the students. Several students spoke of how their education at the Center has changed their lives, giving them greater opportunities, self-confidence, and a sense of contributing to society in a culture that does not always embrace the physically challenged. The students pay no tuition and are not asked to pay back the school, rather they are asked to "pay it forward" to society. During the

visit, U/S Hughes and Ms. Kwan presented specially designed exercise equipment to the Center's Director.

Television Interviews

13. U/S Hughes and Michelle Kwan were interviewed by two of the Province's most watched TV stations for broadcasts of taped programs in the next two weeks on Guangdong TV's "Number One Dialogue" (which targets officials, academics, students, and local citizens) and Guangzhou TV's "Expat Chat." Both interviews focused on the importance of public diplomacy and exchanges in strong bilateral relationships, America's cultural diversity, and our shared values, particularly on the importance of families. The most influential TV station in the Province, Guangdong TV is connected via satellite to all of China and neighboring countries, especially Southeast Asian countries, potentially 60 million viewers. Guangzhou English Language TV has a customer base of over 1 million (and still growing), and its viewers are interested in learning more about the United States.

Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (Guangwai)

14. The development of an innovative society and President Hu's own hopes for a harmonious society depend on the free flow of information, U/S Hughes told Guangdong University of Foreign Studies students and faculty. She expressed USG appreciation for China's spirit of partnership in hosting the Six-Party Talks and its cooperation on Iran, and reiterated that America welcomes a peaceful and prosperous China that is a responsible stakeholder in the world

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community. While this does not mean that the United States and China will agree on every issue, the U.S. does view China as a new, and very important, global neighbor. U/S Hughes clarified that the United States still has "concerns" over China's military modernization, and respectfully hopes China will be more transparent in its affairs.

15. In a very lively question and answer session, U/S Hughes pointed out the United States understands that the pace of change differs in each country. In response to a question about what America was doing to enhance human rights, U/S Hughes said that while some may consider speaking out on human rights an interference in China's affairs, America believes that speaking out on such issues is our obligation because of our beliefs in the importance and value of the individual. U/S Hughes said that encouraging NGO's can actually promote a harmonious society by providing an outlet for peoples' views. She told the audience that one job that public diplomacy needs to do is to show China that the America they see on TV is not necessarily the America that people lived in. Chinese may be surprised to learn that America was the number one donor to the World Food Program, has committed millions of dollars to eradicate HIV/AIDS and malaria in Africa, and was the number one donor - through WHO - of food and medicine to the Palestinian people. U/S Hughes admitted that the USG is not going to change peoples' minds overnight, but that it is a long-term effort whose aim is to build bridges of understanding in the world, adding that an important way to do so is by reinvigorating cultural exchanges. In a closing statement at the school, U/S Hughes said that what was important for journalists to remember is their role of "comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable," and to ensure that problems were raised and reported so that they could be confronted.

Michelle Kwan Visits Changle Elementary School

¶ 6. While U/S Hughes spoke with students at Guangwai, Michelle Kwan visited Changle Elementary School faculty and students, telling them that, like her, they could make their dream come true through dint of hard work. Ms. Kwan told them how pleased she was to have the opportunity to talk with China's youth. Ms. Kwan also read to over 100 students, toured the campus, and watched a jump rope performance by the students who had been selected to appear on national television during the Chinese New Year. Afterwards, she participated in some games with the students.

U/S Hughes Administers Oath to Adoptive Parents

¶ 7. The entire delegation reassembled to participate in the swearing in of American parents adopting Chinese orphans at the Consulate's Tian Yu facility. U/S Hughes administered the oath to the new parents, after which she, Ms. Kwan, Ambassador Randt, and the Consul General chatted with the parents and their children and posed for pictures. Guangzhou's adoption facility handled nearly 6,500 adoptions in 2006 and is the busiest U.S. adoption facility in the world, processing one-third of all U.S. international adoptions.

Meeting with Executive Vice Governor Tang

¶ 8. At the end of the day January 22, the delegation paid a courtesy call on Executive Vice Governor Tang Bingquan, who welcomed them to Guangdong, and expressed his appreciation for their taking time to make Guangzhou a key part of their China trip. He thanked the Ambassador and the Consul General for their work in improving bilateral relations, and highlighted Guangdong's growing economy. U/S Hughes praised Guangdong's economic "dynamism" and encouraged the development of better relations through educational and cultural exchanges. She noted the opportunity for cross-cultural exchanges offered by the 2008 Beijing Olympics and emphasized Michelle Kwan's public diplomacy role as a bridge to China given her cultural and ethnic ties to China. U/S Hughes reiterated U.S. support for a strong and prosperous China.

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